

Southampton Archaeology Society

January 2016 Newsletter



Dear Members

We're nearly four weeks into the New Year, and we made a good start with our first lecture on 12th January, when about forty members and guests heard a lively talk from Andy Skinner on chalk cut figures. Many thanks to Terry Pook for his contribution in the article on the White Horse at Osmington, inspired by this talk. Thanks too to Alison Parsons for pictures of Quarr Abbey, featured below, and to Ingrid Peckham for the report on recent archaeological work in Southampton (attached).

The list of Southampton Archaeology Society lectures is provided with this edition, up to and including our AGM in May. The next lecture will be given by our old friend, pottery specialist Duncan Brown, now working with Historic England down the road in Portsmouth. Duncan will be speaking on Pottery in Medieval Houses on Tuesday 9th February and I have no doubt he will tell us some fascinating stories. The talk starts at 7.30pm in St Joseph's Hall, Bugle St SO14 2ED (poster attached).

The booking form is attached also for our Study Day on Saturday 27th February, the finale to our series on Southampton through the Centuries, *Southampton Between the Wars*. This will feature talks by Nigel Smith on the transport system, Andy Russel on Art Deco architecture, Bill White on entertainment, among others, with the introduction given by Vicki Green of the Local Studies team at SCC. We hope many members and friends will be able to attend; the SAS committee will be planning future events which we hope will include more practical workshops and training days, and we would welcome ideas and input from members.

With best wishes

Sarah

Quarr Abbey update

Following the report on our visit to the excavations at Quarr Abbey in the last newsletter, I heard from Alison Parsons about a visit she made there later in September. The dig had ended and local people told her that 'nothing' had been found – not what we heard from the archaeologists! We look forward to seeing Matt Garner's report from last year, and meanwhile Alison sent some lovely pictures which I thought you'd like to see (below and overleaf).



Above: General view of today's Quarr Abbey buildings from south west.

*Below: View of refectory of the medieval abbey of Quarr.
Photos: A Parsons.*





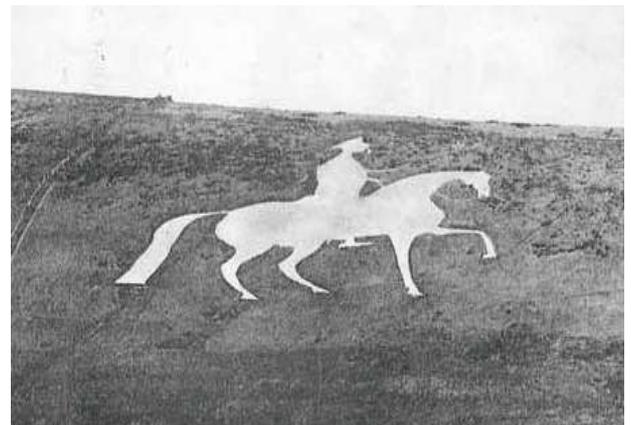
Pigs, chickens and produce at Quarr Abbey farm. Photos: A Parsons



Many thanks to Alison Parsons.

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The Osmington White Horse

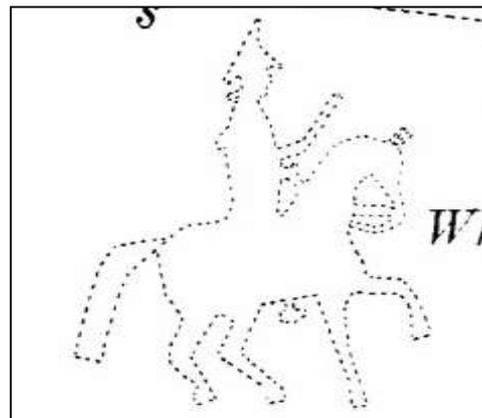
After our talk this month by Andy Skinner about chalk hill figures I found some information about the origin of the Osmington Horse, (near Weymouth, Dorset) from the November 2011 edition of the Dorset Life Magazine, which had an article about a group of people who were responsible for its creation. It is a representation 280 feet long and 320 feet high of a horse and its rider cut out of the chalk on the side of the hill. The figure, cut in 1808, represents King George III on his grey charger, Adonis (see right). The King visited Weymouth on several occasions between 1789 and 1805 and would ride along the top of the hill on which the horse is carved.



The people involved with carving the monument were John Wood, a Weymouth bookseller, Robert Serrell Wood, who owned the land, James Hamilton, a Weymouth architect and John Rainier (1742-1814), a London stockbroker who funded the project. The shape of the horse, surveyed between 1860 and 1870 as depicted on the larger scale Ordnance Survey map, was designed by James Hamilton, the architect in charge of planning the figure (see overleaf). He was required to use his architectural prowess for the design, as the curvature of the hill meant it was not simply a case of

cutting a horse shape. Could this James Hamilton have been the source of the name 'Hamilton House' at Blechynden in Southampton while it was being lived in by John, the son of John who financed the hill figure? He designed another Hamilton House at Wyke so the Rainiers must have been aware of his work.

John Rainier was younger brother of Admiral Peter Rainier, who amassed a huge fortune during his time in the navy and died a wealthy man. In his Will he gave £25,000 to help reduce the national debt, the remainder going to his younger brother, John but why John financed the White Horse is still a mystery. Perhaps John paid for the carving as some kind of memorial or maybe his legacy was conditional on providing a sea mark. Whatever the reason I am sure that his brother would have appreciated the gesture, after all, the monument is best seen from Weymouth Bay and John's two sons both entered the navy so would have seen the monument as they sailed down the channel, and it would have been an interesting talking point among their fellow officers. John died just six years later and the White Horse was then described as a 'seamark' on Admiralty charts, further strengthening this maritime connection.



Regarding the wealth of Admiral Rainier (commandeered from lands he visited while he was on duty in the Indian Ocean in 1796), what may be more interesting and of greater long-term significance with that voyage, was that one of Rainier's squadron, *HMS Suffolk* was taking part in an experiment organized by the Admiralty in implementing a long-term trial of citrus fruit as a remedy for scurvy. Lemon juice was issued on board the *Suffolk* on her twenty-three week, non-stop voyage to India during which there was no serious outbreak of scurvy. The following year the Admiralty adopted a general issue of lemon juice to the whole fleet which subsequently earned the British sailor the nickname of 'limey', but it avoided much loss of life and severe illness on board ships. (This paragraph is taken from an unpublished doctorate thesis by Peter Ward).

A family descendant, another Peter, having been in the Navy settled in Southampton after his naval service ended in 1823 and lived in Carlton Crescent with his wife and family. Captain Rainier was a naval officer of some distinction, he joined the Corporation at this time and was elected Sheriff of the town in 1829. He was one of ten new aldermen elected in 1835, the first year after the Reform Act, as a conservative member, but he never made Mayor as he died in 1836, aged only 50.

Terry Pook

Australian archaeology

Australia may be seen by many people as having little or no interesting archaeology, since European settlement began here in 1788 when the First Fleet arrived at Botany Bay, to start a colony with 1200 unwanted English convicts. But the land had already been occupied by *H sapiens*, the First Australians, 45,000 years earlier and the story of how our species reached the other side of the world before spreading into western Europe is an amazing adventure which even now isn't fully understood. The Australian land mass was isolated for many thousands of years and until ~45kya no hominins had lived there. Meanwhile the indigenous fauna developed unique methods of birth and nurture (eg marsupial) while many creatures had grown very large (megafauna), including giant kangaroos, wombats and animals resembling large tigers and lions, which still existed when the first people arrived. Within 10,000 years they were extinct, leaving many questions about the process: there were relatively few humans and no direct evidence of hunting in the form of stone tools associated with animal remains; but changes due to fire or bush

clearance by humans would have compromised the animals' habitats and ability to reproduce, and they became extinct.

The antiquity of human occupation in Australia was demonstrated in 1970, when the cremated bones of a young woman (Mungo Lady) were found by geologist, Dr Jim Bowler (Canberra University) in sand dunes known as the Great Walls of China at the eastern end of the former Willandra Lakes system.

Four years later, in the same area (now part of Mungo National Park), Jim Bowler found a male skeleton (Mungo Man) which evidenced deliberate burial: the remains of both are dated to ~40000 years ago, and these are the earliest known modern human burials in the world. Australian Aborigines therefore claim that their culture has enjoyed the longest continuous existence of any yet known. This was cruelly disregarded by modern settlers who until recently showed little respect for the aboriginal stories of Dreamtime and country (the Songlines), or their ability to understand the landscape and how to sustain its productivity.



Great Walls of China, Mungo National Park, NSW (see text).



Map of Aboriginal tribal languages, National Museum, Sydney.

This map made in 1996 indicates that the aboriginal inhabitants adapted their territories according to the 'carrying capacity' of the land, covering larger areas in the less productive dry interior. Around the coast especially in the east where rainfall is higher, territories were smaller as the land was more productive with more varied resources, such as fish and seafood.

The long indigenous heritage, together with the histories of later immigration and exploration in Australia, can be a revelation for many visitors

and each state and city has its own story, told in their world-renowned museums and historical sites. From early convict settlements in Sydney and Tasmania, the development of agriculture and mining, to the nineteenth century Gold Rush in Victoria and further settlement in the west and north: every journey would reveal aboriginal rock carvings or paintings, abandoned farmsteads, ghost mining towns and poignant memorials. Besides the history there is the fascination of landscape, botany, wildlife and birds – there is so much more to Australia than the usual 'tourist trail' of city sights, sun and beach life!

We had five weeks in south east Australia last October and November, and I hope this short account gives you a flavour of the excitement and inspiration we felt in discovering the story of Australia.



Aboriginal bark painting, South Australian Museum, Adelaide (artist unknown).

Sarah and Dave Hanna

Southampton Archaeology Society lecture list 2016 (February to May)

February 9th 2016 Duncan Brown

'Living with pottery in medieval houses'

The challenge for archaeologists has always been to repopulate the past through the study of the things people left behind. This talk explores how finds from excavations can help us to understand how people used pottery in their homes; where they got it from and what they wanted it for. Five different medieval houses are considered, from a lowly peasant farmstead to the castle of an earl and the nature of medieval society is explored as the lives of those different people are compared and contrasted – but be prepared for a twist at the end to keep you thinking!

Duncan Brown was formerly a Curator of Archaeology with Southampton Museums and is now Head of Archaeological Archives with Historic England.

February 27th 2016 Study Day **'Southampton between the wars'** – see attached booking form.

March 8th 2016 Dr Gabor Thomas

'Places of Power and the Making of Anglo-Saxon Kingdoms: New Archaeological Perspectives from Lyminge, Kent'

This talk reflects upon the results of a major scheme of excavation targeting Anglo-Saxon settlement remains preserved beneath the modern village of Lyminge, Kent, led by the University of Reading and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. Encapsulating the detailed examination of a seventh-century 'great hall' complex and the outer zones of a documented monastic foundation, these investigations have furnished one of the richest developmental accounts of a royal centre in Anglo-Saxon England. Dr. Thomas will examine Lyminge's trajectory as an Anglo-Saxon settlement over the fifth-ninth centuries A.D. and consider its implications for wider interpretations of early medieval power and kingship.

Dr Thomas is Associate Professor in Early Medieval Archaeology, Archaeology Dept, Reading University.

April 12th 2016 Josie Mills

'Neanderthals of the Channel River Valley: New work at La Cotte de St Brelade'

The Channel River Valley is a key region for investigating changing Neanderthal behaviour during the Middle and Upper Pleistocene (~250-30 kya). In this talk we focus on recent investigations into the nature of Neanderthal use of place and landscape in Normano-Breton Gulf, with a particular emphasis on new work on material from the key archaeological sequence from La Cotte de St Brelade, Jersey. This remarkable site has produced over 250,000 artefacts and in excess of >10,000 faunal remains (including 13 Neanderthal teeth) from an extensive sequence of deposits reflecting occupation and abandonment of the site by Neanderthals over ~200,000 years. Jersey is currently an island, but during large parts of the Pleistocene would have been an upland terrestrial 'island' within a now submerged landscape of the Normano-Breton gulf, or a peninsula linked to France. This changing geographic status can be linked to the archaeological and environmental record from La Cotte enabling us to recreate patterns of Neanderthal behaviours.

PhD student involved with the project in Jersey, studying at UCL.

May 10th 2016 AGM

Please join us for our Annual General Meeting and a glass of wine. Afterwards Dr Andy Russel will give a short presentation on recent archaeological work by the Southampton Archaeology Unit.

Some other events:

Sunday 31st January 2016 Tudor House Talk 2.00 – 3.00pm. *Goody Wives and Wheeler Dealers: the women of Tudor House* – Historians Miranda Murphy and Kathryn Beresford explore the fascinating stories of the women who lived in Tudor House in Tudor and Jacobean times. Georgian Room, Tudor House Museum, St Michael's Square, Bugle St, SO14 2AD; £4, booking essential on (023) 8083 4536.

Wednesday 3rd February Southampton Central Library 11.30 – 12.30am/2.00 – 3.00pm. Getting Started with Ancestry.com: introductory session to using Ancestry.com to start compiling your family history and trace those long-lost ancestors. After this session you may continue exploring Ancestry.com for free on library computers across the city. Central Library, Civic Centre, Commercial Rd SO14 7LP; places are limited so please book by calling Vicky Green on (023) 8083 2205, or email local.studies@southampton.gov.uk

Friday 5th February to 4th June 2016 Southampton Art Gallery. Exhibition: *The Romantic Thread in Art* drawn from Southampton's outstanding fine art collection enhanced by important loans, from the late eighteenth century to the present. The exhibition encompasses the high Romantic era of the early nineteenth century, Pre-Raphaelites, Pastoral Etchers, Neo-Romantics and modern artists concerned with the environment. Galleries 1 – 4, Art Gallery, Civic Centre North Block, Commercial Rd SO14 7LP; FREE entrance. Open Monday – Friday 10.00am – 3.00pm, Saturday 10.00am – 5.00pm, closed Sundays.

Saturday 6th February Avenue Campus, University of Southampton, Highfield Rd, SO17 10.00am – 4.00pm. Festival: *Welcome to Our World (WOW)* organised by Intercultural Connections Southampton (ICS) to celebrate the cultural diversity of Southampton, with opportunities to experience customs and traditions of many different cultures. Events include a Lifelong Learning Study Day on Anthropology and Ethnology (10.00am – 4.00pm, need to register), craft and cookery demonstrations, dance workshops, debates and lectures, all free to attend. For registration and information visit lifelonglearning@soton.ac.uk, and follow the link to WOW Festival.

Saturday 19th March Tudor House History Study Day 2016 10.00am – 4.00pm. Theme: *Heroes and Villains of Southampton*, this will be an inspiring day of talks exploring the lives of characters from the city's past. Speakers include Dr Cheryl Butler (on *Humphrey Gilbert to Richard Taunton- Pirates or Patriots?*); Harry Willis Fleming (on *Richard Cockle Lucas*); Dr Andy Russel (on *O G S Crawford 1886 – 1957*); Andy Skinner (on *Life and Times of Ellen Wren*) among others. Tickets £32 or £30 (concs), booking 8083 4536 or through Tudor House/SeaCity Museums and Southampton Art Gallery. Refreshments included.

Lectures are free to members and £2 per visitor. Please bring your friends! All lectures will take place in St. Joseph's Hall, Bugle Street, Southampton SO14 2AH, unless otherwise stated, from 7.30pm to 9.00pm. Tea and coffee is served from 7.00pm. Please join us at the Duke of Wellington pub after the meeting.

2015 - 2016 SAS Committee

Chair – Martyn Dowell
Vice-Chair –
Treasurer – Sarah Hanna
Secretary – Anna Welch
General Committee Members – Terry Pook, Sylvia Horlock, Mandy Kesby, Rowan Bright and Matt Garner. Archaeological Advisor: Dr. Andy Russel.

Subscription Rates

Individuals	£9.00
Senior Citizens	£7.00
Juniors/Students	£7.00
Family	£12.00

If you or a friend would like to join (or if you haven't yet renewed your subscription) please send your details to Sarah Hanna, with a cheque for the appropriate amount payable to Southampton Archaeology Society – or you can pay at next lecture.

Contact us

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